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THE GEORGIC: A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF THE VERGILIAN TYPE OF DIDACTIC POETRY.

By Marie Loretto Lilly, Ph. D. In *Hesperia*, Supplementary Series: *Studies in English Philology*, no. 6. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1919. Pp. viii+175.

The purposes of this work, of which the first part was prepared as a Johns Hopkins University dissertation, are (1) to define the georgic as a literary type, with especial reference to its relation to the pastoral; (2) to sketch its historical development; and (3) to discuss English georgics dealing with agriculture in general, with gardens, and with field sports, with some consideration of similar poems in French and Italian. German and Spanish literature have been excluded from the inquiry.

The field seems one little cultivated before by students of literary history and the results of this study, covering twenty-eight centuries from Hesiod to the present, are of no little interest. The type was, of course, most definitely fixed by Virgil, and a synopsis of the contents of his Georgics is given as a necessary preparation for the study of later works. From his day, however, until the Renaissance, georgics appear infrequently (hardly averaging one instance to a century, according to Dr. Lilly). Sixteenth century classical imitation revived the *genre*; in the seventeenth century it again declined; but in the eighteenth, in considerable measure under the influence of works like Philips's *Cyder* and Thomson's *Seasons*, it was eagerly restored and experienced manifold adaptations, making its way, in company with a renewed love of Nature and the taste for English gardens, back from England as far as Italy. This was the period of its greatest vogue; the nineteenth century witnessed another decline, and from the twentieth the author cites only the *Géorgiques chrétiennes* of Jammes. For these general results, by no means unexpected, but yet clearly expressed, we may be grateful to Dr. Lilly. Certain details of her work, however, are open to not a little criticism.

In the first place, the plan of the book, with definitions and an historical sketch, followed by a detailed treatment of individual works, involves a large amount of tedious repetition.¹ Again, as the author realizes, there is a good deal of inequality between the first part of the study, done under supervision and with access to adequate libraries, and the last part, dealing with works many of which were not accessible,² criticism of which had, consequently, to be expressed at second-hand, if at

¹ E. g., pp. 4 and 63; 28 and 104. Infelicities in the English of the treatise are not infrequent, e. g., p. vii: "in part fulfillment of"; pp. 7-8 (an awkward repetition); p. 104: "second century, A. D."; p. 106: "he names three . . . declaring the terrestrial the more dangerous."

² E. g., p. 2, nn. 3 and 4; p. 5; p. 6, nn. 18 and 22; p. 29, n. 25; p. 36, n. 45; p. 52, n. 6; p. 157; p. 169; *et passim*.

all.³ This dependence upon the opinions of others—though generally frankly admitted—and the evident lack of close acquaintance with the Greek works in the field,⁴ is somewhat disquieting; nor are the original literary judgments of the writer concerning poems which she has read always free from a certain sophomoric character. The documentation is painstaking, but the authorities employed, especially in dealing with Greek and Latin works, might be much better chosen.⁵

One may express doubt whether the georgic and the pastoral are still so frequently confused as Dr. Lilly (p. 20) assumes, and whether so elaborate a discussion is needed (pp. 19-50) to disentangle them. On the other hand, the author herself seems to extend the term 'georgic' pretty widely, especially on pp. 42-43, where she admits nautical, medicinal, and town georgics, among other species of the genus.⁶ In this she is doubtless following the usage of others in regard to the term 'eclogue,' but that word is colorless in meaning as compared with 'georgic,' and if the latter be too much extended there is danger that it may lose its real significance and become synonymous with 'didactic.'

Of the completeness of the work it is not easy to judge. Certainly in the Greek field the names of a number of authors might be added to those here mentioned, and though little is known of most of them, yet, from a time when the type was being established, that little might be precious.⁷ The unfortunate lack of a bibliography or an index makes it difficult to see at a glance just what works have been treated, but additions may

³ E. g., pp. 60-63, depending on Hauvette; pp. 68-69 on Larousse; pp. 110-112 on Aubertin and Jullien; p. 117 on Jullien; pp. 121-122 on Guinguené; pp. 153-158 and 168 on Manly; *et al.*

⁴ Cf. pp. 10-11; 141. The etymology of the word 'georgic' as given on p. 20 suffers from the author's ignorance of Greek, as does the passage on p. 138 where the 'stater' is called a 'status.' The translation of Virgil's famous line (on p. 21), "Tityrus . . . meditates the woodland muse on his slender reed," leaves something yet to be desired.

⁵ E. g., on p. 3, instead of Glover's *Studies in Virgil* (1904) his later *Virgil* (1912), pp. 33 ff., might well have been cited; instead of Conington's 1872 edition of volume 1 of Virgil's works the revision by Haverfield (1898) should have been consulted; the 1873 English translation of Teuffel's *History of Roman Literature* is now completely antiquated. For a question of fact, as in p. 28, n. 22, some recent history of Latin literature, like that of Schanz, should have been cited, rather than Addison's *Essay on the Georgics*, and similarly in p. 53, n. 57, in place of the work of Lodge. The translators of quoted lines are not always clearly named. In p. 9, n. 1 Varro should be cited by book and chapter, not by the pages of an English translator.

⁶ Onasander, *Strat.* 1 states that treatises on horsemanship, hunting with dogs, fishing, and georgics (γεωργικῶν συνταγμάτων) are usually dedicated to those interested in such things. It will be noted that these form a group corresponding to that treated by Dr. Lilly (though she does not consider the various works on horsemanship), and that 'georgics' are separated from the other species.

⁷ For example, Athenaeus mentions (1, p. 13) as writers of *halieutica* Caecilius of Argos, Numenius of Heraclea, Pancrates of Arcadia, and Posidonius of Corinth, in addition to Oppian and to two prose writers on the subject.

be made to the latter part of the work from articles in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* on Angling (by Sheringham) and Italian Literature (by Oelser; especially p. 903). Perhaps the works of F. D. Pastorius might have been mentioned.⁸ One cannot escape the suspicion, particularly in a field principally cultivated by the less famous poets, that other minor georgics, perhaps in some numbers, may still lurk unlisted. The relations of the poetic georgic to more technical prose works upon the same themes, such as, in Greek, the *Geoponica*, the *Cynegeticus* of Xenophon (and perhaps his treatise upon horsemanship; cf. n. 6 above), the works of Cato and Varro in Latin, the treatise on hunting by Don Juan Manuel in Spanish, etc., might perhaps have received passing notice. And in her discussion of the disappearance of the georgic in the nineteenth century (pp. 37 and 175) Dr. Lilly might have suggested as a contributing cause, at least, the increasing use, for the expression of scientific ideas, of a technical vocabulary distinctly unpoetic in character.

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THE ENGLISH POETS. Selections with critical introductions by various writers, and a general introduction by Matthew Arnold. Edited by Thomas Humphrey Ward, M. A. Volume V. Browning to Rupert Brooke. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1918. Pp. xix, 653.

"The Fifth Volume of *The English Poets*," states the general editor in his brief preface, "deals with those writers who have died during the period that has elapsed since Volume IV was published in its original form—a period of nearly forty years." In respect of arrangement and critical apparatus it follows not unworthily the preceding volumes of the series, although the editor occasionally exhibits a strange arbitrariness in his choice of the minor poets of the period. Certain of the critical introductions deserve high commendation. Especially noteworthy are those prefixed to the selections from William Morris, Swinburne, George Meredith, and William Barnes, which are the work of J. W. Mackail, Edmund Gosse, J. C. Bailey, and Thomas Hardy, respectively. Long ago in one of the dozen finest biographies in the language Mr. Mackail made William Morris in a special sense his own subject; and the lucid and attractive essay which he here contributes is perhaps the most notable piece of criticism in the volume. Felicitously he characterizes

⁸ Cf. Riverside edition of the poems of J. G. Whittier (1894), 519.